

HAID OF THE STATE

To the Charitable and Penal Institutions Should Have More Careful Supervision.

THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSION

Appointed by the Last Legislature to Look Into the Systems of Management in Vogue.

CONVICT LABOR ON PUBLIC ROADS

Is Considered Desirable, but Solitary Confinement is to be Severely Cautelized.

OFFICIAL TELEGRAM TO THE DISPATCH.

PHILADELPHIA, Jan. 27.—Among the last items of business agreed upon by the Legislature before adjournment two years ago was the appointment of a State Commission for the purpose of inquiry and investigation into the various systems of management governing the charitable and penal institutions of Pennsylvania, where State aid is part of the support.

Every member has been given a definite share in the multitude of duties that opened up from the start and the task has been found to be much greater than had been anticipated. Congressman Reyerburn said today at the Continental, where he met some friends as a sort of Christmas holiday diversion, that the report of the commission was not ready yet for publication or submission to the Legislature, but the recommendations and suggestions inspired by the common effort of the commissioners were about ready for embodiment in the proper papers, and would be prepared early in the new year.

System of Solitary Confinement.

About the first move of the commission was the election of an inspector or special agent to visit the state asylums, penitentiaries, reformatories and public institutions. The duty was delegated to Allen J. Wagenhorst, of Scranton. A feature of his report bears upon the employment of convict labor, and comments in severe terms on the system of solitary confinement that prevails in the Eastern Penitentiary. The investigation of the commission shows the members united and decidedly against solitary confinement for any long period. Mr. Reyerburn does not believe that it was ever the intention to subject long-term prisoners to this cruel punishment, but the commission found that the wording of the law indicates solitary confinement as the strict interpretation of the act, even where it relates to such inmates as Shellenberger, the Bucks county embezzler, whose sentence covers the next 21 years, and Ted Brimmer, the Lancaster embezzler, who is there for 15 years.

A special study was made of the employment of convict labor, especially as it was found throughout Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia and Mississippi. There is no hesitation in condemning it where such labor enters into competition with any considerable amount of other labor, but the report of the commission shows the members united and decidedly in favor of the employment of such labor on State work, particularly in connection with the much agitated question of road building and repairs.

Convicts on the Roads.

It is found that in the Southern States visited the State roads were maintained and

kept in good condition by this law. Chronic violators of the law and old-timers are to be kept indoors at labor and their work goes to the support of those on duty inside. This plan also relieves prisoners from the evils and vitating influence of association, and the Commissioners believe it to be salutary prison reform.

A close and careful examination has been made into the management of various State institutions, like the soldiers' orphans' schools, the asylums for the insane, the hospitals benefited by State appropriations, the blind and dumb asylums and the reformatories. The report embodies recommendations of reform in this part of the system. The commission had before it statistics taken from pamphlet laws passed in the last decade showing that the State has appropriated in various sums \$40,000,000 to \$50,000,000 to blind and deaf asylums, hospitals and other institutions, in the distribution and use of which the State has had no voice.

To Keep Track of Expenditures. The public treasury has been literally a public grab bar and beyond the record of the law and warrant of allowance there has been nothing done. The commission finds that the management of these institutions consists of boards of managers and directors, the only qualification for membership being a small annual subscription, in some cases amounting to \$3 only. The report recommends that the State shall make provision by act of Legislature for an inspector or board of inspectors, who shall be represented in every governing body of the institutions receiving State aid and who shall give an annual statement on the expenditures of every such institution.

This plan places a reasonable degree of responsibility on the boards. Under the present system it is always difficult and in some instances impossible to ascertain the disposition of appropriations made by the Legislature. This is not the case at asylums for the insane like Dymont, Warren, Harrisburg, Danville and Norristown, nor in the case of soldiers' orphan schools, reformatories or the penitentiaries, where annual reports submit to almost every detail to proper inspection; but abuses at the blind asylum in this city and irregularities in others show the need for State inspection and constant vigilance.

Must Have a Head.

The commission will recommend a plan to secure some uniform system of accounts by compulsory statements showing what becomes of every dollar of the appropriations. The main idea of the Commission as narrated in their coming report is to have a definite head and a defined responsibility attaching to all institutions and this head is to be held to strict account for all funds and aid given by the State. The members of the commission believe that their work has really begun. It is complicated, intricate and trying, far beyond any expectation had in the beginning, and they have labored earnestly to cover a great deal of ground.

The report touches caustically and at length the certain public institutions, particularly the blind asylum in this city, but the nature of the recommendations is kept a secret.

THE NEW HAMPSHIRE MUDDLE.

Clerk Jewett Files His Answer to the Democratic Charges.

CONCORD, N. H., Dec. 27.—Clerk Jewett filed this afternoon the answers to bills entered against him by the Democrats in connection with the make-up of the roll of the next House of Representatives. He avers therein that he has refrained from determining any question that may arise in the certificate, and he says he supposes it to be his duty to put on the roll the names mentioned in the petition, provided the proper certificates are presented, and that he now intends to put them on unless he shall become satisfied that such is not his duty.

But, nevertheless, he prays advice, instruction and a decree of the court as to his duty in the premises.

THE NATURAL GAS SUPPLY.

Fort Wayne Facilities Will be Deprived of It for a Season.

FORT WAYNE, IND., Dec. 27.—Considerable apprehension for the continuance of the hitherto abundant supply of natural gas has followed the announcement by President Paul that after January 1, the railroad shops and all manufacturing establishments will be expected to resume the consumption of coal. Gas has been denied to the local electric light power station for several weeks.

Reviewing the situation to-day, President Paul stated that the economical order was promulgated, not because of any expected failure of gas supply, but because it was feared that the amount the big 40 mile main could deliver to this city would be so largely used by manufacturers that private consumers might suffer. A second and larger main will be laid to the gas fields this spring.

A PHANTOM FLEET.

One Hundred Boats Lost in St. Mary's Bay Still Sail Its Waters.

The legend of the spectral fishing fleet of St. Mary's Bay is of more modern origin. In 1862 a fishing fleet, homeward bound from the Grand Banks, was driven by stress of weather into St. Mary's Bay. The storm increased in fury, and 100 boats went down on that August day in the storm-tossed waters.

There are now hundreds of fishermen ready to swear that ever since, when they have sought shelter in fog and storm in St. Mary's Bay, they have caught glimpses of a phantom fleet, heard the flapping of the sails and the shouting of the sailors when no fleet was there. This may be accounted for by the fog, which nearly always hangs about the bay, for any one who has sailed in a fog knows that he can see and hear almost anything he pleases in it.

MORE THAN A CENTENARIAN.

A Man in Tennessee Earns a Living as Copyist, Though 119 Years Old.

Correspondence Globe-Democrat. Fred Walker, aged 119 years, is undoubtedly the oldest man in West Tennessee. He lives at Savannah. The writer, while in that city, called upon the old gentleman to learn something of his career. Mr. Walker stated that he had voted for every President of the United States from Thomas Jefferson down to the last Presidential election, and he confidently expects to be on deck to cast his ballot in 1892. Strange as it may appear, Mr. Walker makes his living by copying for the County Clerk of McNairy county, which proves that his sight is good. Mr. Walker's motto always has been: "There is no bread for idlers."

HOW COFFEE WORKS.

In Some Cases It is Apparently a Food, in Others a Poison.

The Epoch. "I drink," remarked a gentleman to me recently, "four or five cups of coffee daily. If I stop drinking coffee I get a headache."

Another gentleman of my acquaintance, on the other hand, gets a racking neuralgic headache every time he takes even a very small quantity of coffee, and a Bostonian who became blind, a film having formed before his eyes, found that his sight was restored when he stopped drinking coffee.

Her Modesty Forbade.

Washington Post.

"Now," said the visitor to his wife, "I think we'll go and see the Patent Office." "No, John," was the firmly spoken reply. "I hear that it is full of models, and after all that has been written of the 'Clemenceau Case,' I prefer to keep away."

AN ALLIANCE AT WASHINGTON.

The Capital Can Muster Enough Farmers for an Organization.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 27.—Very few people outside of the Farmers' Alliance are aware of the fact that that order has an Alliance in working order in this city. The local membership is not large, for the number of farmers in the district is necessarily small, and as a fact there would be no organization in Washington were it not for the fact that many National Alliance officers are located here.

This part of the great agricultural camp is known as Capital Alliance No. 22, and is under the jurisdiction which controls the State of Maryland. Farmers, farm laborers, country mechanics, country physicians and country preachers alone are eligible, and those must all be men of good moral character. Infidels, merchants, lawyers and all persons connected with or employed by corporations of any kind are shut out.

CHILDREN UNDER THE ICE.

Five Michigan Boys Meet With a Terrible Skating Accident.

MUSKOGON, MICH., Dec. 27.—Last evening Claude McCarthy, aged 13, and John Mahar, 12 years old, together with three young companions, were skating when the ice gave way and precipitated them into the water.

McCarthy and Mahar were drowned, but their playmates, after a long struggle, reached the shore.

EMORY STORRS' SON RELEASED.

He Was Arrested in Washington on a Bond Forfeiture Charge.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 27.—George M. Storrs, son of the late Emory A. Storrs, of Chicago, who was arrested here several days ago on a warrant from New York, claiming the forfeiture of a bond at White Plains, and whose hearing on a writ of habeas corpus is set for Monday next, was released from the custody of the Marshal to-day on a bond of \$300.

A Point for Pittsburg Boys.

Good News.

An exchange, in commenting on a coasting accident, sagely suggests that "sliding down hill has its drawbacks." Of course it has; the sled has to be drawn back after every trip. "Was always thus."

She Had Graduated.

New York Herald.

Crabapple—Don't you believe, Miss Sweetie, that I could teach you to love me? Miss Sweetie—Possibly; but as I have made my debut it is rather late to go back to a tutor.

One Way to be a Boy Again.

Indianapolis Journal.

The man who sighed for the lost dreams of his boyhood could likely bring them back by eating one of his boyhood suppers.

Stylish Suitings.

The largest stock suitings, overcoatings, silk vestings and trousers at Picatin's 434 Wood street.

By calling "Hello, 1186," you can order the finest ales and beers for your family's use. IRON CITY BREWING CO. TRBSS

NEW ADVERTISEMENTS.

PSORIASIS 20 YEARS

Body a Mass of Disease. Suffering Fearful. All Thought He Must Die. Cured in Six Weeks by Cuticura Remedies.

I have been afflicted for 20 years with an obstinate skin disease, called by some Dr. J. P. Swinney, and others Leprosy, commencing on my scalp; and, in spite of all I could do, with the help of the most eminent doctors, it slowly but surely extended, until a year ago this winter it covered my entire body in the form of dry scales. For the last three years I have been unable to do any labor, and suffering intensely all the time. Every morning there could be heard a rattling of scales falling from the sheets on to the floor, some of them half as large as the envelope containing this letter. In the latter part of winter my skin commenced cracking open. I tried everything, almost that could be thought of without hope. The 12th of June I started West, and hoped I could reach the Hot Springs. I reached Detroit, Mich., and was so low I thought I should go to the hospital, but finally got as far as Lansing, Mich., where I had a sister living. 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